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PROGRAM

NBC Nightly News

STATION

WRC-TV
NBC Network

DATE

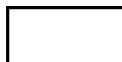
December 8, 1986 7:00 P.M.

CITY

Washington, D.C.

STAT

SUBJECT



Director Casey Responds to Critics

TOM BROKAW: The Central Intelligence Agency has not emerged as a major player in this arms scandal, so far, but it has been a bit player since the Iran-Contra connection was first disclosed. And its Director, William Casey, has come in for increasing criticism. So today, as NBC's national security correspondent, Art Kent reports, Casey went on the attack.

ART KENT: An angry CIA Director struck back at his critics this evening, insisting once again that neither he nor the CIA had done anything wrong in the Iran-Contra operation. Casey reserved his harshest criticism for Senator Richard Lugar.

DIRECTOR WILLIAM CASEY: I'm deeply disappointed that a U.S. Senator of Dick Lugar's stature and reputation has seen fit to rush to judgment without the benefit of the information which I and other CIA officers are making available to our oversight committees.

KENT: Casey said the oversight committees would be convinced.

DIRECTOR CASEY: I'm confident that those members who do have access to it will agree that the Agency and I have acted in a lawful and proper manner.

KENT: Casey was adamant that the CIA was not even aware of any money from Iran other than the \$12 million that was owed the Pentagon for arms.

It was on NBC's Today program earlier this month that Senator Lugar called for Casey's dismissal.

BRYANT GUMBEL: Should he ask for Bill Casey's resignation?

SENATOR RICHARD LUGAR: Yes, I think he should.

KENT: According to senior intelligence officials, Casey has been seething ever since and had prepared a public rebuttal. Instead, he made his statement to a House Defense Appropriations Committee this afternoon.

Casey will be testifying in closed session before the House Foreign Affairs Committee Wednesday, where he will again insist that the CIA is clean on the Iran arms deal.